CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of converting a datafile having a first format into a second format for printing, comprising:

conveying the datafile in a first format to a printer, said printer for receiving datafiles in a first format and printing datafiles from a second format, said printer including a controller,

activating said controller for translating said datafile into said second format;

accessing a registry database over a network using said controller for selecting a translator;

selecting a translator for a conversion sequence, said conversion sequence including an initial translator and at least one subsequent translator;

conveying at least a first job specification command to at least one translator in said conversion sequence, said initial translator in the sequence accesses said datafile in said first format and said at least one subsequent translator in said conversion sequence directly accessing an output of said initial translator;

converting said datafile to said second format;

conveying said datafile in said second format to said printer; and

printing said datafile from said second format.

2. The method of claim 1, where said printer further comprises a web server.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said at least a first job specification command is conveyed using said web server.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said at least first job specification command comprises a uniform resource locator (URL).

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said at least first job specification command is conveyed to a last of said subsequent translators in said conversion sequence.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein said at least a first job specification command activates said last subsequent translator to access data directly from said prior translator in said conversion sequence.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said at least first job specification command is conveyed to said initial translator.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein said at least first job specification command activates said initial translator to directly convey output data to said at least one subsequent translator.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein said registry database is contained on a computer that is geographically separate from said printer, and accessing said registry is accomplished over a network connection.

10. The method of claim 1, where said initial translator and said at least one subsequent translator are located on geographically separate computers that are accessible to one another and to said printer over a network.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein said network includes the internet.

12. A method of linking format conversion programs to convert a datafile from an initial format into a desired final format, comprising:

accessing a registry database containing information on translators to determine what translators are available over a network;

selecting among said translators to design a conversion sequence, said conversion sequence including an initial translator and at least one subsequent translator;

conveying at least a first job specification command to at least one translator in said conversion sequence to activate to initiate said conversion sequence, such that said initial translator in said conversion sequence accesses said datafile in said initial format and said at least one subsequent translator in said conversion sequence directly accesses an output of said initial translator;

converting said datafile to said desired final format as said initial translator in said conversion sequence accesses said initial format datafile and converts it into said output in another format, and each said subsequent translator in said conversion sequence directly accesses said output of said prior translator in said conversion sequence and converts it into a subsequent format until said datafile is converted into said desired final format.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein said at least first job specification command comprises a uniform resource locator (URL).

14. The method of claim 12, wherein said at least first job specification command is conveyed to a last of said subsequent translators in said conversion sequence.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein said at least a first job specification command activates said last subsequent translator to access data directly from said prior translator in said conversion sequence.

16. The method of claim 12 wherein said at least first job specification command is conveyed to said initial translator.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein said at least first job specification command activates said initial translator to directly convey output data to said at last one subsequent translator.

18. The method of claim 12, wherein said registry database is contained on a computer that is geographically separate from said printer, and accessing said registry is accomplished over a network connection.

19. The method of claim 12, where said initial translator and said at least one subsequent translator are located on geographically separate computers that are accessible to one another and to said printer over a network.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein said network includes the internet.

21. A system for printing a datafile in an unsupported initial format, comprising:

a registry database containing information concerning a selection of datafile format translators that are available using a network;

a printer attached to said network, said printer configured to receive datafiles in a number of unsupported initial formats and to print datafiles from an appropriate final format, said printer further comprising a controller,

said controller configured to initiate a translation of said datafile from said unsupported initial format into said appropriate final format by accessing said registry database to determine an availability of said selection of translators over said network and designing a conversion sequence from said selection including an initial translator and at least one subsequent translator to perform the conversion;

said printer further configured to convey at least a first job specification command to at least one translator in said conversion sequence to activate to initiate said conversion sequence, such that an initial translator in said conversion sequence accesses said datafile in said unsupported initial format and at least one subsequent translator in said conversion sequence directly accesses an output of said initial translator to convert said datafile in an unsupported into a subsequent format until said datafile is converted into said appropriate final format allowing the datafile to be printed.

22. The system of claim 21, wherein said registry database is stored on a computer in operative communication with said network.

23. The system of claim 22, wherein said network includes the internet.